

Crop Residue Classes

Crop residues are generally classified as being either Fragile or Non-Fragile.

The classification of residues as Fragile or Non-Fragile is a subjective determination based in part on the ease with which crop residues are decomposed or buried by tillage operations.

Plant characteristics such as the size of leaves and stems, density of the residue and relative quantities produced, are considered when assigning classifications.

Table 1 lists agronomic and horticultural crops that are generally considered as having Fragile crop residues. Table 2 lists agronomic and horticultural crops that are generally considered as having Non-Fragile residues.

Table 1. Crops with Fragile Residues

Canola/Rapeseed	Guar	Soybeans
Dry Beans	Lentils	Sugar Beets
Dry Peas	Mint	Sunflower
Fall Seeded Cover Crops	Mustard	Sweet Potatoes
Flower Seed	Peanuts	Vegetables
Grapes	Potatoes	
Green Peas	Safflower	

Table 2. Crops with Non-Fragile Residues

Alfalfa or legume hay	Grass hay	Sorghum
Barley*	Millet	Speltz*
Buckwheat	Oats*	Sugarcane
Corn	Pasture	Tobacco
Cotton	Pineapple	Triticale*
Flaxseed	Popcorn	Wheat*
Forage seed	Rice	
Forage silage	Rye*	

* If a combine is used with a straw chopper or otherwise cuts straw into little pieces in harvesting small grain, then the residue should be considered as being fragile.

The classifications listed in Tables 1 and 2 are accepted by the Agricultural Research Service and by the Equipment Manufactures Institute.

Source: National Agronomy Manual, Second Ed. Amend. 5, October 1993, 503.52(a)